

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting for the above-reference subcommittee held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Present Committee Members were: Councilors Seldon, Neuwirth and Washington

Also present were: Yvette Huyghue-Pannell, Director of Senior Services, Jane Low, Chair of Beautification Committee, Marie MacDonald, Chair of CEEC, Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Seldon and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 1, 2015.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Senior Services

Mrs. Yvette Huyghue-Pannell, Director of Senior Services reported the following updates of the department upcoming events:

On November 12, 2015, Senior Services participated in the moveable senior center program. Residents had a great time in sharing with the LBGT community.

On November 17, 2015, the department in collaboration with Foodshare participated in the Thanksgiving Turkey giveaway of 139 turkeys to seniors. Volunteers from the Bloomfield High School track team and other students assisted with this event.

The department held their Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Luncheon for 100 seniors. Touchpoints sponsored the food, service and volunteers for this event.

On December 28, 2015 from 1:30 p.m. – 6:15 p.m., a Blood Drive will be held at Senior Services.

Mrs. Huyghue-Pannell reported that the department have several upcoming retirements at the end of December 2015 of the following persons:

- Mrs. Lucy Peoples - Mini-bus coordinator
- Mr. Walter Hodges – Mini bus driver
- Mrs. Sara Shapiro - Senior Services Assistant

A retirement celebration for Mr. Hodges will be held on December 9th from 1:00 – 1:45 p.m. and a farewell reception will be held for Mrs. Peoples on December 16th from 1:00 – 1:45 p.m.

Social & Youth Services

Mrs. Camilla Jones, Director of Social & Youth Services reported the following updates of the department:

The department assisted with two residential fires: Bloomfield Housing Authority, family was displaced and assistance was provided by the Red Cross for initial lodging. The family did have renter's insurance which was used to extend temporary housing options. The department gave the family a \$250.00 gift card to assist with food and basic needs. The second fire was located at Beaman Brook Condominiums which impacted 13 units. The department responded on the night of the fire with the Red Cross. All units were able to locate alternative lodging, however one unit did not have renter's insurance. The department provided this unit with a \$250.00 Visa gift card as well and a referral to Gifts of Love in Avon, CT. They were able to reside with family until the unit is ready for occupancy, mid to late May.

The Bloomfield Alliance for Safe Homes has their first meeting in November. This team will bring together various town departments to address household with safety concerns such as: hoarding, blight, etc. The Salvation Army and Red Cross was invited to discuss how they work with local municipal social services during a crisis. The team will meet again in January 2016 to plans the next steps.

The department has had successful collaboration with Prosser Library and the Bloomfield Interfaith Association for the Conversation on Race in October. There were a total of 63 participants in attendance.

The department distributed 110 Thanksgiving baskets to low income households with children ages 13 and under. The wish lists for holiday gifts have been distributed to various local companies and agencies in town.

We will continue to assist individuals with general case management services including utility advocacy, rental assistance, eviction/prevention referrals, housing safety issues, wellness checks for homebound seniors, DSS benefit advocacy, mental health referrals and probate court.

Youth Services hosted a Juvenile Justice Forum on October 7, 2015 held in collaboration with the Hartford Regional Court local interagency support team. Outside facilitators posed questions to 12 youth and 28 parents were in attendance. Every town in Greater Hartford held a forum.

After School programming has begun for Carmen Arace Intermediate School – Journeys Program. There are currently 65 enrolled participants with a daily range of attendance between 45-60 youth. Program activities include a wide range of games, team building activities, new gym activities beyond traditional sports, fundraising competitions, game show competitions and arts and crafts.

Carmen Arace Middle School Academy have 16 youth grades 7th – 8th registered. They meet Tuesdays from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. They also meet two weeks per month for Intergenerational activities and the remaining two weeks they focus on leadership activities.

Leisure Services - Parks and Recreation

Mr. David Melesko, Director of Leisure Services reported the following updates of the department:

There are 83 members currently enrolled in the youth center from grades 7th – 12th, will an increase during basketball season.

On November 13, 2015, the department had a successful Family Bingo event.

The after school program in collaboration with Social & Youth Services and the Bloomfield Board of Education have 65 students enrolled in the program in grades 7th & 8th. In addition, grades 5th & 6th with the Board of Education subcontractor three days a week.

In addition, there are 15 students enrolled in Leisure Services programs from grades 5th – 8th.

The Saturday program schedule has been successful with basketball, tiny feet soccer program for preschoolers, stepping dance and exercise classes. However, the drop in volleyball program has not been that successful with lack of participation and sign-up. The department are in the process of creating new programs such as an alternative “Pickle Ball”.

Mr. Melesko reported that the department has begun hiring for summer programs. The hiring process is earlier this year due requirements for full Federal background checks.

The new membership program “My Recreation” is accepting registrations and has been implemented in the youth center.

The “Colors of the Season” will be held on December 4, 2015 from 5:00 – 6:30p.m. This event will have entertainers, horse and carriage rides as well as refreshments for residents to enjoy.

The greenhouse and the two outer buildings at Lisa Lane are scheduled for demolition, with roof and electrical concerns. There are some issues with current installer that are being negotiated.

Mr. Melesko and staff attended the Annual Connecticut Recreational Conference.

Mr. Melesko has been involved with coordinating a space plan for the Human Services building located 330 Park Avenue. On November 5, 2015 potential bidders received a tour of the building. It was noted that 10 proposals were submitted from vendors. On December 15, 2015 interviews will be held.

Mr. Melesko met with Mr. Kevin Gough regarding the Bloomfield Bike Connectivity Plan. There is a committee meeting scheduled in late January to discuss walkways, trail system and bike ways.

On January 4, 2016 at the Administration/Education subcommittee meeting, KMS Designs will present recommendations for the Community and Parks wayfinding signage in town.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Farmington River Park – CREC Two Rivers Magnet II school complex will be issued in February 2016.

In late January 2016, a series of Gardens will begin with six workshops. Mrs. Vicki Reski, resident and Landscape Architect will coordinate this series.

It was noted that the GHPA would like to begin a feeder program for 4th – 10th graders. Mr. Kevin Kersey is the contact for this program.

Beautification Committee

Mrs. Jane Low, Chair of the Beautification Committee reported the following updates:

New signage has been installed highlighting “donated and maintained” by the Green Machine at the “Welcome to Bloomfield” sign located at Blue Hills Avenue and Cottage Grove Road.

Mrs. Low informed the committee that the cul de sac located at Jerome Avenue has been completely redone and landscaped.

The Beautification Committee would like to recommend an “Adopt-a-Spot” Program. They are proposing participation from the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development Commission and the Town Manager’s Office. The goal of the program is to attract businesses in town to volunteer beautifying areas in front of their respective locations.

Mrs. Low are reported that the Beautification Committee is still slow on recruiting individuals to join and participate.

It was noted that the plant order for next Spring in the works to be ordered through the Public Works department.

Clean Energy and Conservation Committee (CEEC)

Ms. Marie MacDonald, Chair of the CEEC reported the following updates:

The CEEC was honored for high achievement at the gold level for Clean Energy Communities. The town is on their way to receive 3rd Bright Ideas grant as well as participation in LED lightbulb exchange program.

A 12 panel solar system has been installed on the roof of the P. McMahon Wintonbury Library from green bank funding in the amount of \$13,283.70.

The committee will continue their effort with the Home Energy and Business solutions programs. NES, Victory Energy and Paquette Electric, current vendors will give back \$25.00 residential and up to \$250.00 for businesses for every energy audit completed.

CEEC made recommendation to guide vendors in creating an attractive marketing plan with Eversource to convince businesses the benefits of the Business Energy Solutions program.

The Prosser Fund at First Congregational Church will assist seniors age 60 and over with paying the \$99.00 home energy audit fee.

Beginning in February/March 2016, representatives from Senior Services and Social Services and will market this program during Foodshare days at the Senior Center. Other local media outlets such as BATV, Bloomfield Messenger and the Interfaith Association are available and in support marketing efforts.

The Environment and Energy Smarts (EES) program has been introduced to the Bloomfield Public School system.

The Public Works department have replaced older lights with fifty LED lighting on several residential streets as a pilot program.

Councilor Joel Neuwirth gave a brief update of the “*New Celebrate Bloomfield*” event for 2016. The schedule of events will be held June 1-5, 2016. There are currently six individuals on the steering committee. The next scheduled meeting will be held on January 20, 2016 at 12 noon.

The committee has plans for approximately 11 events with some new programs such as a Poetry reading and knitting group at Prosser Library, Craft Fair on the Town Green, Blue Hills Fire Carnival, Dinner at the Golf Course and the University of Hartford Choir in the first night concert series.

The committee also have plans for a community golf tournament scheduled for May 7, 2016. The estimated cost will be \$100.00 for golf and barbeque.

The Bloomfield High School Art department are currently working on logo for Celebrate Bloomfield.

The Mitchell Auto group will host a poster contest to kick off events.

Councilor Neuwirth will propose funding to support these events in the FY 17/18 budget cycle.

The “Grub Crawl” is in discussion to return as apart of Celebrate Bloomfield.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Neuwirth, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.